1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920)1932
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land. The *Ten'dan'* of Bade also told *Misore* about the festival of the 'bad water-moon.'[1]

The Territorial Ruler: The position of the territorial rulers among the Talense appears to be so similar to that already described when discussing the neighbouring tribe, the Nankanse, as to leave little or nothing to add to what has been recorded. The Talense Chiefs go to Kurugu for their 'red fez.' When a vacancy occurs, there is a scramble among those eligible to fill the vacancy, one vying with another for the post, which, as likely as not, falls to the highest bidder. This method of selection would appear to have very little to recommend it, save that it appears to have been in vogue before our advent in these parts. No doubt it does not 'pay' the Chief, in whose hands the selection lies, to appoint a man who is wholly unacceptable to the people, and the 'presents' tendered on these occasions seem to have been a recognized and not unimportant portion of the revenues accruing to a head Chief. The custom becomes, perhaps, more subject to abuse when we find it practised in turn by the lesser Chiefs in the appointment of the *kambon na*, who, as I have already stated, often seem to usurp the positions which should by right be held by the section-leaders.

In an old 'District Record Book,' at Zuargu, under a date of nearly twenty years ago, I found a note, of which the following is an extract. It refers, I think, more especially to those Chiefs whom I have named 'Government-made-Chiefs': 'The people look with suspicion on any one who prospers and becomes the owner of property, or on any of their so-called 'Chiefs,' who, backed up by us, "put on airs," and try to assume control over the people. The Chiefs have no prestige, no historical names to quote as their predecessors.' This is as true to-day as it was twenty years ago.

The position of the head of a family and of other members of his household among the Talense does not exhibit any features with which we are not already familiar. The following is an additional note on pawns.

Talem (pawns): A man may want to get money to become a Chief and pawn (verb, *nwe talema*) his son. If he is head of a house, he need not ask any one's permission; if not, he will consult his father or elder brother. 'A pawn's head is not shaved as is a slave's.' A boy is pawned for from one to four cows. The debtor is *sandan*, the creditor *bondam*. If the *talem* dies, the *sandan* still has to pay. Famine might cause a man to pawn or sell his son. 'If you sell any one, you give the *Ten'dan'* a goat or a fowl because the land does not agree to that (*tey npu sayera.*)'

[1] See Chapter XXVI.

2: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1945
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its founding ancestors and its own differential line of agnatic descent. Each sub-clan sacrifices separately to its own founding ancestor. Mosuor is regarded as the common ancestor of all the sub-clans, but the cult of his shrine is the sole prerogative and duty of the Tongo branch of his posterity. According to Tale interpretation, a long period of territorial separation, bringing about political independence of one another, has inevitably resulted in the corresponding religious autonomy of each unit. A *bɔyar* cannot be separated from the grave and the home-site (*daboog*) of the ancestor it enshrines. Though the custody and cult of Mosuor's *bɔyar* are the exclusive province of the Tongo branch of the clan, because residence, lineage, and ancestor cult must have a concurrent continuity, these rights and duties are held to be exercised on behalf of the whole clan.

An unusual incident showed how the cult of Mosuor's *bɔyar* is related to the constitution of the clan. It was on the occasion of the great sacrifice to Mosuor and the other early ancestors of Tongo described below (pp. 53–4). When the beer was being distributed, a man called out that there was a young man from Yaməlag present. This was quite unprecedented. The elders began to discuss the situation vigorously. The people of Yaməlag had no right to attend such a sacrifice; but they were Mosuor's agnatic descendants, and if one of them turned up by chance, could he be excluded? 'Is not Mosuor their ancestor as well as ours?' At this point the Yaməlag man stepped forward. He said that the question was of no importance; he was not a complete outsider intruding on the ritual of people not connected with him, neither was he there as a representative of Yaməlag; he had come solely in his personal capacity, to 'scrounge' some of the beer and meat, and not to take part in the sacrifice. In short, though he could not be turned away from the sacrifice (as, say, a Zubiun or Zoo man would have been) without offence to the clan ancestors, his presence there did not signify a claim by Yaməlag to be represented at such rites, nor would it establish a precedent for the future. On this understanding, so amicably reached, he was given a courtesy portion of beer and meat.

As with the ancestor cult, so with the chiefship. Each sub-clan has its own chiefship (*na'am*), in keeping with its territorial and political autonomy, but the prototypical chiefship is that of Tongo, since it was established by Mosuor. Just as the four sub-clans are 'brothers' (*sunzɔp*) to one another, so their chiefs are 'brothers' (*sunzɔp*) equal in status but graded in seniority of rank, Tongo being the most senior and Biuk the most junior.

The equality of status of the four sub-clans is paralleled in the structure of the maximal lineage which they constitute. In their relations of clanship they are distant 'brothers' (*sunzɔp*), treating one another as relatively autonomous lineages. A Tongo man, when his conduct is determined by the norms of clanship, thinks of Yaməlag, Sie, or Biuk as a corporate unit. Its internal structure is of no relevance to him. At any of these places, in any relations of clanship, he represents Tongo, taken as a unit, irrespective of his position in its internal structure.

The children of Mosuor think of their maximal lineage as finally and

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consequence, become almost completely submerged in the authentic lineages. Only one attached lineage (Zɔŋ yidɛm) still intermarries with other members of the sub-clan, provided they belong to a different major segment from that to which Zɔŋ yidɛm are attached, and these marriages are not encouraged. At Sie, by contrast, 15 out of the 43 wives of Siedatɔk are members of Wooŋ yidɛm or other branches of Mosuor biis not related to them by clanship ties.

The attached lineages at Tongo are accounted for by the stereotyped tradition which is found, in similar circumstances, all over Taleland. The story is that a woman of the authentic lineage concerned (e.g. Lɛbhtiis yidɛm)—a 'sister' in the classificatory sense—married a member of one of the Hill Talis clans and bore children to him. Later, however, her husband divorced her by the rite of 'blowing' (*pɛbh*), by which he not only banished her from his home but disowned the children she had borne to him. She returned to live at her parental home, where her children grew up and settled, and where one son gave rise to the lineage attached to his mother's brother's lineage. Because of their founding ancestors' paternity, which even the act of formal repudiation of wife and child could not extinguish, two of the attached lineages preserve the totemic taboos and some of the funeral customs of the Hill Talis. It is a religious duty which they say could not be abandoned without the greatest peril.

Apart from this mark of distinction and the disabilities which will be mentioned later and which apply to all accessory lineages, they participate in social events as ordinary segments of the lineages to which they are attached. They can even represent these lineages in relation to other groups.

An attached lineage is said, sometimes, to have sprung from an unmarried girl's son (*yiyeembii*). His paternity never having been socially recognized, it has no influence on his social role or on that of the lineage which originates from him. Thus, such a lineage has all the customs and observances of its maternal lineage—the lineage, that is, of its founder's mother, to which her son is reckoned as belonging. The third attached lineage at Tongo is said to be descended from an unmarried 'sister's' son and their ritual observances confirm this view.

Tongo also includes several assimilated lineages. These are indistinguishable, at first sight, from the authentic lineages either by the criterion of differences in custom or from their manner of participation in the social events which mobilize structural relations. Whatever their real origin may be alleged to be, they are linked to the constellation of authentic lineages by the fiction of direct agnatic descent from the founder of the whole sub-clan, Mosuor himself. They are, as this implies, more closely welded into the sub-clan than are the attached lineages. It would be inconceivable, for example, for a member of an assimilated lineage to marry any other member of the sub-clan.

Attached lineages, everywhere, are incorporated into a lineage of authentic descent by an indirect route, as it were. They are hinged on to the true agnatic line by a compromise, as descendants of a woman of the true agnatic line. This introduces a clear distinction by the canon

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of descent. The status of an attached lineage is always somewhat ambiguous. On the one hand, there is nothing derogatory, by native standards, in the link through a woman, as will be more fully appreciated when we come to the domestic side of Tale social structure.[1] It is but an accident of birth, argue the natives, which made their ancestress a woman instead of a man; otherwise they might have been as much members of the unbroken patrilineal line as the authentic lineages. This explains why attached lineages do not hesitate to advertise their identity by holding to distinctive ritual usages and traditions of origin, and why they may, as at Sie, have a place in the social structure which makes use of their genealogical position. The 'accident of birth' is capitalized as a factor of social organization. On the other hand, there is no escaping the fact that it bars the attached lineage from complete absorption by the authentic line. Its members are debarred from the privileges which are indefeasibly bound up with the unbroken agnatic line and symbolize the uniqueness of this line. They could not at Tongo, for example, participate in sacrifices to Mosuor until recently (see below, pp. 54–5), and they cannot succeed to the custody of his *bɔyar*. They can join in sacrifices to the founding ancestor of the authentic lineage-segment to which they are directly attached; but they cannot hold the custody of his *bɔyar*. The Tongo chiefship is of course rigorously closed to them. All these are crucial values, and to be excluded from the rights and privileges associated with them is a distinct disability. The rights which an attached lineage has in the sub-clan are in part a concession. Thus, though its status need never be glossed over, it cannot be vaunted.

Assimilated lineages, by contrast, cannot be discriminated by means of an explicitly accepted modification in the canon of agnatic descent, since they are always regarded as having sprung from 'strangers' (*saan*, pl. *saam*), slaves or refugees. To incorporate them in the lineage structure of the sub-clan there is no alternative but to assimilate them by a fiction. A male slave is thus incorporated into his master's family and a refugee into that of his protector. Homeless and kinless, they must be endowed with a new social personality and given a definite place in the community. But the bond of actual paternity cannot be fabricated; the fiction is a makeshift and always remains so. A slave or a refugee can never acquire the one right which is conferred exclusively by the tie of blood, or as the Tallensi say, of begetting (*dɔyam*), the right to offer sacrifice directly, as the owner (*daana*) of his shrine (*bayər*)[2] to the spirit of the patron whom he has described in his lifetime as his father (*ba*). In this respect they have no advantage over matrilateral kin, for a man's spirit can receive direct sacrifice only from his agnatic posterity. Like matrilateral kin, also, an adopted slave is barred from rights of inheritance and succession that are confined to the agnatic line, even though he is for all practical purposes the child (*bii*) of his patron in a way that a matrilateral kinsman could never be.

[1] This is dealt with in the second part of this study, *The Web of Kinship among the Tallensi*.

[2] *Bayər* (pl. *bayə*) is the generic term for any ancestor or medicine shrine; *bɔyar* (pl. *bɔyə*) is the special shrine dedicated to the founding ancestor of a lineage.

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Assimilated lineages, therefore, all over Taleland, though thoroughly absorbed into the structure of the sub-clan or clan, suffer the same disabilities as the more precisely differentiated attached lineages; they cannot, however, make a virtue of this, as the latter sometimes can; they cannot explain away their status. To tax a person, openly or explicitly, with being the descendant of a slave (*da'abər bii*) is one of the deadliest insults, however remote his slave ancestry may be. This is more than a matter of etiquette. It amounts, in certain circumstances, to blasphemy against the spirit of the man who originally adopted this slave ancestor. Thus, under this rule of courtesy to clansmen and respect for ancestors, the status of an assimilated lineage is never commented on publicly unless a serious issue hangs on it or a severe quarrel is involved. This exceptional circumspection about assimilated lineages shows better than anything else their ambiguous position in the clan.

Such elements of the social structure as these are not apparent at first glance. I did not discover the existence of assimilated lineages at Tongo until the end of my first year in the field. To do so it was essential to have a very thorough understanding of the way the lineage system works and of the internal structure of the Tale community. I was able then to notice and to be puzzled by the absence, or self-effacement, of certain people in situations where they would normally be representing their lineage segments. It was not the behaviour to be expected of them if their segments were of equal status with the authentic segments of Mosuor biis. Veiled hints began to have a meaning which confidential informants confirmed.

One of my earliest friends and frankest informants at Tongo was Sayəbazaa, an elder in whom the chief had the greatest confidence and who was universally esteemed for his industry and probity. Sayəbazaa was the head (*kpeem*) of Nəŋsuur yidɛm, a major segment of one of the major segments of Tongo. One of its members held an important and confidential office under the chief. Nəŋsuur yidɛm appeared to be of the true agnatic line of Mosuor. I took this for granted the more readily because, when the Great Festival season came round and all the elders of Tongo were summoned to the chief's house so that a diviner could be consulted, it was Sayəbazaa who consulted the diviner on behalf of the chief and the whole of Tongo, in order to ascertain what offerings must be given to Mosuor and the chiefly ancestors.

Nevertheless, Nəŋsuur yidɛm is an assimilated lineage whose founding ancestor is vaguely said to have arrived with Mosuor. Though almost completely absorbed by the authentic line of Mosuor biis, a last barrier remains, which I discovered only through one of the most striking of the events which revealed the existence and status of accessory lineages at Tongo. It showed also how there is a continuous process of adjustment going on in every sector of the social structure, resolving the tensions and contradictions latent in it.

It was an occasion of historic importance marking the climax of one phase in the absorption of the accessory lineages by the authentic lineages of Tongo. The occasion was that of the great thanksgiving sacrifice to the founding ancestors of Tongo, Mosuor and his son Sɛyahəg, which took place in 1936. Beer and animals were contributed by the chief, who gave

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the Yakɔradɛm ('the people of the old homes') mingle with those of their Tongo neighbours and spread out irregularly into what is properly Ba'ari. The next block of homesteads, separated from them by a stone's throw and known as the Kpaɣara-yaɣardɛm ('the people of the Kpaɣara side'), so named after a sacred pool in their midst, abuts on the fields of other Tongo neighbours and straggles over into the part occupied by the third maximal lineage. These, the Yapaasdɛm ('the people of the new homesteads'), have Zoo homesteads as their neighbours on one side and somewhat more distantly Ba'ari neighbours on the other. By the criteria of clanship with which we have become familiar, Zubiuŋ forms a single clan; the three maximal lineages act together as a unit in all secular and religious affairs of common interest.

Outsiders regard Zubiuŋ as a single unit, like Tongo or Zoo, and the relations of its constituent maximal lineages to one another are organized on the plan of a single maximal lineage of three segments. Thus, the mortuary rites or funeral ceremonies of an important member of any one of these lineages cannot be carried out without the presence and collaboration of representatives of the other two lineages. They have the reciprocal privileges and obligations of close clan *sunzɔp* in relation to one another. They speak of one another as kinsmen by consanguinity (*dɔɣam*).

Nevertheless, it is generally known that the three segments of Zubiuŋ are of diverse origin. The Yakɔradɛm have a status senior to the others. According to the myth, which has already been recorded, their founding ancestor (*yaab*) was a 'brother' of the primordial Gbizug tɛndaana. They were the first to settle at Zubiuŋ. The Kpaɣara-yaɣardɛm, who are next in order of seniority, claim that their line was founded by immigrants who accompanied Mosuor as his Gbandaat—a ceremonial office which is still their exclusive prerogative in relation to the Chief of Tongo. The Yapaasdɛm are said to be offshoots of the other two lineages, and are therefore the most junior. The relative status of the three lineages is shown in all their corporate activities. Thus, if they make a joint sacrifice and the sacrificial animal is provided by either of the senior lineages, the Yapaasdɛm receive only a shoulder (that is, a junior portion) as their rightful share, whereas the other lineages receive the legs (the senior portions). The two senior lineages are relatively equal in status compared with Yapaas.

Overlooking this diversity of origin, the people of Zubiuŋ say: 'We have become consanguineous kin (*ti leeba dɔɣam*).' One focus of their unity and corporate identity as a clan is their External (*yɛŋha*) *Bɔɣar*, Duunkpalɔg, a sacred grove whose mystical powers are renowned and respected far beyond the borders of Taleland. Duunkpalɔg is the shrine of all the ancestors of all three maximal lineages. 'All our ancestors are there (*ti yaasaam maabi be nɛŋha*)', is the formula used by the natives to define this shrine. Any ritual event which involves a sacrifice at Duunkpalɔg requires the presence of all three lineages, each represented by its head (*kpeem*), and he should be accompanied by the head of each constituent segment of his lineage and by any other of its mature male members who are able to come. The ideological dominance of

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These offices are either chiefship (*na'am*) (or its equivalent, the senior office connected with an External *Bɔŋar*) or tɛndaanaship.[1] Chiefship is primarily associated with the Namoos, though not exclusively so, tɛndaanaship with the clans and maximal lineages claiming to be the autochthonous inhabitants of the country, though, again, not exclusively so. Both chiefship and tɛndaanaship are, to the natives, unitary institutions made up of offices distributed among a number of clans and lineages. The range of these institutions is not even limited to Taleland. All chiefs are 'brothers' since they derive their office from a common source, the Paramount Chief of Mampurugu; all tɛndaanas, similarly, are 'brothers' since their office has the same function and ritual value everywhere in relation to the Earth. The chain of ritual collaboration is one expression of this notion.

Among the Tale chiefs (*na'ab*, pl. *nadɛm*) the Chief of Tongo (*Tɔŋraana*) ranks highest. He has no political, administrative, or judicial authority over any other chiefs, or any other clan than his own, but his office incarnates the quintessence of *na'am*. He represents all the chiefs of the country in the ritual attributes of chiefship. Tɛndaanas, in keeping with the elaborate segmentation of the clans in which this office is vested, are more equal in status. But in every cluster of closely interdependent contiguous clans there is one tɛndaana who ranks higher than his confreres. The Gbizug tɛndaana ranks above the tɛndaanas of Zubiuŋ, Gbeog, and Wakii, and the Doo tɛndaana above the other Tɛnzugu tɛndaanas.

As we have seen, the Earth cult and the External *Bɔŋar* cult function as polar opposites in the structural dynamics of the Hill Talis' clan system.[2] In terms of politico-ritual office it is chiefship and tɛndaanaship that have this polar relationship. Within a particular clan and between interdependent contiguous clans the complementary politico-ritual roles of chief (or his equivalent) and tɛndaana form the axis about which the body of moral, jural, and ritual values that binds the community into a unity revolves. Such a community may be a clan (as, for example, Dkoog) or a cluster of interdependent clans (as, for instance, Tongo and its immediate neighbours); and at the times of the Great Festival, the community that emerges includes all the Tallensi and some non-Tallensi.

Chiefs and tɛndaanas had no political power, as we understand it, before the coming of the white man. They had no administrative, or executive, and only rudimentary judicial powers. They were the leaders and not the rulers, the fathers and not the princes of their clans. Where the social ends served by the native political system are concerned, this pat-

[1] We are concerned here with the role of these politico-ritual offices in the native social system as it was before the establishment of British rule and as it still functions vigorously in situations that fall outside the orbit of the British Administration's sanctions and demands. It is convenient, however, to follow the usage of the Administration in calling the functionary who holds the office of *na'am* a chief rather than overload our analysis with an excess of native titles. But there is no comparison between Tale 'chiefs' and the rulers of great African nations like the Ashanti or Bemba, or even the chiefs of southern Bantu tribes. Cf. *African Political Systems* previously cited. My article in that book deals more fully with the subject of this section.

[2] Cf. Chap. VII.

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613 nuclear lineage; but this land may be some distance from the ancestral
621 home, owing to the scattering of holdings.

Looking at it from the native point of view, we should say, not that individuals tend to live near one another because they are agnatic kin, but that all lineages down to the effective minimal lineage tend to be tied to localities; and the more closely lineages are related, the greater is the spatial propinquity of their dwelling areas. The distribution of households is not rigidly parallel to the lineage structure at a given time. Mere spatial proximity cannot be directly translated into terms of lineage proximity. There is a diachronic element as well. Kurug's homestead (No. 6), for example, is nearer to Pumaan's (No. 5) in yards and feet than to Lɛbhtiis's; but Kurug is closer to Lɛbhtiis than to Pumaan in lineage. This is due chiefly to changes in the internal structure of their respective nuclear lineages in the last twenty or thirty years. The spatial relations of homesteads to one another reflect lineage relations in their diachronic aspect.

The Concept of the Lineage Home

613 Lineages tend to be tied to specific localities even if many of their
621 members are permanently or temporarily away from the lineage home.
778 Some representatives of the lineage will generally continue to reside near the ancient home where the spirits of the ancestors still dwell. The *daboog*, the site of the original home of the lineage, the first dwelling-place of its founding ancestor, is a hallowed spot. It is identified by reference to ancestral land and to the graves of the ancestors. These are the fixed things. Homesteads are not eternal. Their collocation reflects the structure of the lineage at a given time; but it changes as the composition and segmentation of the lineage alters. Whenever an alteration of this sort occurs, there is a corresponding reshuffle in the housing arrangements. New homesteads are erected, old homesteads replanned and rebuilt or abandoned. A lineage being an organic unit has, in native eyes, but one home (*yir*), though the material embodiment of this home is distributed at any given time. The *daboog* of the lineage of Nɔpugzabɔr yidɛm, the original homestead site of their ancestor Nɔpugzabɔr, is on what was in 1934 the home farm of the head of the lineage, Deemzeet, a stone's throw from his gateway. The graves of Nɔpugzabɔr and his sons, and a tree which sprouted on Nɔpugzabɔr's grave and is believed, therefore, to enshrine his spirit, mark the spot where his gateway (*zanɔr*) stood.

From this arises the concept of the lineage *zanɔr*. All the homesteads of its members together make up the lineage home (*yir*), and this home has its single gateway (*zanɔr*), the lineage *zanɔr*. The notion is pre-eminently symbolical, but its material embodiment is the homestead of the lineage head, and therefore, specifically, the gateway of his homestead. It applies to all levels of lineage organization, up to the maximal lineage. In a maximal lineage the site of the founding ancestor's homestead is generally a sacred spot, often marked by the erection on or near it of a
[554] miniature room to represent the ancestral *zɔŋ*. This room is one of the shrines connected with the lineage *bɔŋar*, and its custody is vested in a

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segment of the lineage whose head always takes the title of *Yikpɛmdaan*[1] and has the duty of sacrificing to the collective ancestors of the lineage on behalf of all its members. Among clans that have tɛndaanas the senior tɛndaana often has to build his homestead on the site of the founding ancestor's homestead; and when a tɛndaana dies his successor takes possession of the ancestral homestead and his children move out. But many other arrangements exist all serving the same end of keeping alive the idea of the lineage home.

In the lineage we are discussing the three homesteads of the members stand on ancestral land quite close to the graves of the lineage ancestors, Doohraan, Damtii, and Nɔpugzabɔr. When Deemzeet formally became the head of the lineage his homestead housed the lineage *bɔyar* and other shrines of its common ancestors, and his gateway became the lineage *zanɔr*. The ancestral graves of this lineage are actually on land owned by its members. This is not always the case. Changes in the ownership of land as the population shifts frequently result in the land surrounding the ancestral graves of a lineage-segment passing into the hands of members of another segment of the same lineage, sometimes even into the hands of members of a neighbouring clan. The spot continues, nevertheless, to be regarded as the *daboog* of the lineage whose ancestral graves lie there. The conception of the lineage home is split. For jural and social purposes it is the *de facto* home of the lineage, the place where its head actually resides. The site of the ancestral home, marked by the graves of the ancestors, comes to be regarded primarily as the religious focus of the lineage.

The Influence of Lineage Localization in the Social Life

This fact, that in the older settlements the core of a lineage is a locally organized unit, and that its location is associated with its ancestor spirits on the one hand and its patrimonial land on the other, moulds the entire life of its members. The corporate unity and identity of a lineage is a real and tangible thing when its male members can see one another every day, and when most of them, certainly most of their leading men, can gather together easily and in a very short time to consider and take action in affairs of common interest. Classificatory kinship is no mere formality where an individual's childhood companions are his or her own siblings and ortho-cousins of various degrees; where a man's daily intercourse is carried on chiefly with close agnatic kinsmen, and almost entirely with men of the same patrilineal descent, in his section or settlement; where a man can readily, and indeed is compelled to, by the fact of physical accessibility in a culture lacking rapid and indirect means of communication, have immediate and almost exclusive recourse to his patrilineal kin for help in economic activities, support in maintaining his rights or performing his duties, advice and guidance in the conduct of his life, or solace in misfortune. Ceremonial co-operation is not an empty formula

[1] Tallensi are poor etymologists and various equally plausible etymologies are suggested for this title. The most probable is that it is compounded of *yir*, house; *kpiim*, spirits of the dead, and *daana*, custodian or master. This can be translated 'Custodian of the House of the Spirits of the Lineage Ancestors'.

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613 of all the ancestors of the whole maximal lineage, and it symbolizes
621 the 'gateway' (*zanɔr*) of the whole maximal lineage (cf. p. 208). The natives maintain that the original Yikpɛmdaan accompanied his kinsman Mosuor to Tongo as the custodian of this *bɔyar*, in virtue of which he is the *zanɔr kpeem*—the elder in charge of the lineage gateway—of the maximal lineage. Hence it is a common saying at Tongo that 'Yikpɛmdaan is not a Kuorəg man, but he belongs to the whole of this our Chief's House (*Yikpɛmdaan ka Kuorəg nit, u a ti Nayirɔ waabi nit*)'. Nevertheless, Yikpɛmdaan yidɛm are always reckoned as part of Kuorəg in the affairs of that section. Yikpɛmdaan himself acts as the senior elder of the section in jural and ritual affairs that concern it as a whole, superseding the *kpeem* of Bɔyada biis in virtue of his exalted status.

Segmentation and Equilibrium in the Sub-clan

By genealogical reckoning Tongo consists of two major segments: Sɛyahəg biis (Puhug, Guŋ, and Seug), and Bɔyada biis (Kuorəg), each with its accessory lineages. In some circumstances the unity of Sɛyahəg biis in contraposition to Bɔyada biis is recognized. This is the reason why Zoŋ yidɛm, the attached segment of Lɛbhkɔrɛ biis of Puhug, are permitted to marry Kuorəgdɛm but not any members of Sɛyahəg biis, who are felt to be the widest lineage of which Zoŋ yidɛm form a segment. But there is a distinct tendency towards the obliteration of the sense of contra-
[764] position between Kuorɛg and the rest of Tongo as the sentiment of unity, reflected in the conduct of accessory lineages at the great sacrifice to Mosuor in 1936, becomes stronger (see pp. 53–4). I have heard members of Zoŋ yidɛm say that it is not becoming (*de pu nara*) for them to marry into Kuorəg, even though it is no breach of the rule of exogamy to do so. In another decade or so they may well insist that it is not merely unbecoming but forbidden (*kih*), and it would then be a grave discourtesy for anyone at Tongo to remind them publicly of their indirect connexion with Mosuor biis by disputing this.

764 At funeral ceremonies this primary segmentation of Tongo often
613 emerges. Thus, when the funeral of Yɔrug Yin of Kuorəg was celebrated,
621 contingents of elders from all the other sections of Tongo, and from Zoo—coming as *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy—as well as Soog (the clan adjacent to Kuorəg and the 'owners of the land' on which Kuorəg is situated) came in force to the second divination ceremony; for Yɔrug Yin had been the head of Bɔyada biis and headman of Kuorəg. But his son was a poor man and had to temper with economy the munificence that pride dictates
[273] on such occasions. So when the beer was brought for the guests, Zoodɛm
[559] and Soogdɛm were each given a medium-sized pot, and then one large pot was given to *Nayidɛm*, the 'people of the Chief's House', that is, the other three sections of Tongo reckoned as a unit in contraposition to Kuorəg. Had more beer been brewed, or had the *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy and the neighbouring clan not been present, each section would have received its own pot of beer. Similarly, at the funeral of Sayawuob of Puhug's mother, representatives of Zoo came to claim the forequarter (*bɔak*) of the cow slaughtered in her honour, which they were entitled to as *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy. This left only two *nundaas* (major portions, or

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four major segments of the clan have an equal role. All have the same obligations and the same rights, vested in them as corporate units defined in relation to the whole clan; and all the segments must participate in equal degree. A similar corporate activity in a clan like Zubiuŋ is a sacrifice to the External *Bɔɣar*, Duunkpaləg.

The four sections of Tongo are equal and co-ordinate in political and jural matters. In religious matters of common interest Puhug is senior (*kpeem*) to the other sections. This is because Mosuor's grave and *bɔɣar* and Sɛɣahəg's grave and *bɔɣar* are the exclusive charge of Puhug, whose section head (*yizug kpeem*) always has custody of these shrines and officiates in sacrifices to them.

The Local Embodiment of the Ritual Focus of the Sub-clan

Puhug was the original home (*daboog*) of Mosuor. There he dwelt beside Tɛndaan Gɛnət, the site of whose *daboog* is now the sacred dancing-ground of the *Giŋgaaŋ* Festival, hence called Giŋgaaŋ Puhug. This is the hub of Tongo as an enduring and stable local unit. Whatever vicissitudes the clan may suffer, whether it expands or contracts, however widely its members may be dispersed, Giŋgaaŋ Puhug remains for ever fixed and inviolable, the heart of the clan and the visible and consecrated sign of its existence and persistence. At the edge of Giŋgaaŋ Puhug is the grave of Tɛndaan Gɛnət, and nearby are the graves of the first ancestors of Mosuor biis—Mosuor, Sɛɣahəg, and Bɔɣada—marking the sites where their homesteads stood. Thus the ritual and ideological focus of Tongo's corporate unity as a descent group (and the same rule applies to all Tale clans) is directly bound up with its physical counterpart, the local focus of Tongo's unity and identity. In clans that have tɛndaanas, it is usually the principal Earth shrine (*tɔŋgban*) that is the consecrated local focus of the clan.

Mosuor's grave, marked by an irregular flat heap of large stones, lies under an enormous old baobab tree which the people of Tongo say *is* Mosuor (see map of Tongo). On the side of the trunk facing the grave are signs of the sacrifices offered there—dirty streaks of dried blood and flour-water, and patches of fowl and guinea-fowl feathers stuck to the trunk with blood. It is a prominent landmark in Puhug, and a favourite shade tree for the people of the nearby homesteads. There the old men come and rest on hot afternoons, infants are put out to sit, well protected from the sun, while their mothers get on with the household work, and older children come to play or to swing in the branches. It is characteristic of the Tallensi that the people of Tongo treat their most sacred shrines in this realistic and matter-of-fact way in the context of everyday life. The tree is sacred, it is a *Bayar*, but it is also just a tree, whose ritual significance is not relevant except on a ritual occasion. Then it is treated with appropriate reverence. And this is true, also, of ancestral graves, which are often treated very casually and sometimes allowed to fall into such neglect that none but the elders of the lineage descended from him know exactly where a particular ancestor's grave is. Mosuor's grave, however, being of such outstanding ritual importance for the whole of Tongo, is more carefully kept and is always treated with respect.

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613 561 Seniority (*kpɛmət*) is defined by four criteria, singly or in combination according to the situation and the group involved. These are age, generation, social maturity, and status. A youth of 18 is always a 'child (*bii*)'; a man of 40 calls himself a 'child' if his father is still alive, but will be counted among the *kpɛm* if he is head of a nuclear lineage. A chief is always a *kpeem* irrespective of his age or generation.

Succession to lineage headship depends on one very important rule.[1] Within the range of recognized generation differences—that is, at the widest the medial lineage—succession goes by generation, not by age. The son begotten by an old man towards the end of his life takes precedence over his much older grandson. Beyond that range succession goes by age. This is summed up in the maxim 'Generation differences do not cross the *dug* (*dɔŋam pu yakət dug la*)'. This rule is a source of frequent discord.

613 [564] No doubt because of their equalitarian social system and their segmentary social structure, Tallensi attach exceptional prestige value to the attainment of lineage headship, especially in the higher orders of lineage segmentation. Rival claims to headships of greater than medial lineages are based on varying interpretations of the rule of seniority. Thus Yinyɛla of Tɔŋ-Puhug (see pp. 195–6) claimed seniority by generation over all the other elders of Lɛbhtiis yir and demanded redress for having been cheated, as he said, of succession to the headship of Puhug thirty-five years or so before. The other elders declared that Puhug had 'spread' genealogically (*eŋ yaləŋa*) so much since the time of Yinyɛla's grandfather that succession by seniority of generation no longer held outside the inner lineage.

In every maximal lineage (or among Mosuor biis, sub-clan) there is a hierarchy of lineage heads corresponding to the hierarchy of segments and the hierarchy of *bɔŋar* shrines. Obviously a particular lineage head may be head of several segments of different orders. Thus Deemzeet (see p. 194) is head of his nuclear lineage, his medial lineage, and of the whole section of Puhug. At the apex stands the head of the maximal lineage or sub-clan whose status practically always carries with it politico-ritual office. This has an important bearing on the working of the lineage system. Every head of a less than maximal lineage stands for his segment, sometimes in opposition to other segments of the lineage. The head of the maximal lineage is raised above the sectional interests of the segments by his politico-ritual office. He is bound by that office to think of himself as representing the whole maximal lineage and its common interests, irrespective of the segment to which he happens to belong. This is symbolized by his having custody of the focal ancestor shrine of the maximal lineage and is sanctioned by the investment of his position with special ritual status. Though only *primus inter pares*, like all lineage heads, he has the added moral and ritual authority of his office, due to his being identified with the founding ancestors.[2]

[1] This rule and its far-reaching implications are fully discussed in the next [648] volume of this study.

[2] This has often misled Administrative officers faced with rival claimants to jurisdiction in certain areas. When a chief or tendaana says of another 'I gave

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342 462 decorate the walls, and stamping the floors into smooth, hard surfaces are all women's work. According to its size and the number of workers available, from the commencement to the final touches, it takes from three weeks to two months of intermittent but often strenuous labour to build a homestead. This falls chiefly on its future occupants. All [476] the members of the family, including the children, lend a hand. But co-members of the owner's clan, especially of his own local segment and their wives, as well as kinsmen, affines, and friends, lend their services too, and this involves considerable expenditure of foodstuffs to reward them.

356 Again, substantial as they are, Tale houses are not impervious to the weather, with its drastic alternation of great heat and drought and heavy rains. After a couple of years the soaking rains of July and August begin to wear the walls away, rot the thatch, and pit the floors. A man who wants to keep his homestead in trim condition must do some repairs every dry season. New rooms may be added from time to time, if the family grows in numbers, or old rooms allowed to fall in if it diminishes. With such alterations and repairs, a homestead may stand for a generation. In the older settlements many sites have been occupied for two or three generations continuously, the homesteads having been completely rebuilt, bit by bit, several times during this period.

592 554 Building a new homestead is an outstanding event in the life of its owner and a matter of public attention. It always marks a significant change in a man's status—his economic and jural emancipation from minority, or his attainment of eldership high up in the lineage hierarchy. Hence it requires moral sanction and ritual precautions. As we have seen, it also mobilizes all the basic social ties a man has. The house itself, embodying the labour and care of himself, his family, and many of his relatives by blood and marriage, stands as a monument to the efficacy of these social ties.

592 341 We can see why the Tale homestead, looked at merely from the architectural aspect, is the material projection of the social relations that make up the domestic family. All Tale homesteads have the same architectural pattern, just as all Tale domestic families have the same basic structure. Only in one point of style and construction do Tale homesteads differ in type, and this is not a question of taste. The Tallensi have two kinds of roofs, a conical thatched roof lashed on to a frame of rafters, and a flat roof of beaten pile supported on a ceiling of strong rafters. The thatch roof is the easier to make and the most common. But nearly every thatched homestead has at least one flat-roofed room (*pii*), as a matter both of convention and of utility. It is the scene of many activities in the dry season. Men, women, and children sit or sprawl on the roof to rest, to chat, or when they are busy with some sedentary task such as sewing or spinning. Grain, vegetables, and edible leaves are spread out to dry there. On

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sultry nights the head of the house often makes up his bed there. When his grain is ripening on the home farm he climbs on to the *pii* every morning to survey it, and often stands there to keep an eye open for stray animals likely to spoil it. There is always an ancestor shrine or two on the flat roof, as it is the appropriate place for a *yin* shrine in the earliest stage of its evolution; and it is from the flat roof that the alarm call, *yaahi! yaahi!* is broadcast when a death occurs or something untoward happens for which the immediate assistance of neighbours is needed.

But some homesteads must be flat-roofed throughout, though the cost in time and labour is great. For this is a taboo (*kihər*) of the Earth in some places. Almost all the senior tɛndaanas are therefore obliged to have all their rooms flat-roofed; and at Wakii and Tɛnzugu all houses within the acknowledged precincts of the principal Earth shrines (*tɔŋgbana*) of these places must be flat-roofed throughout. This affects the design and construction of the homestead in many details, but not in its basic pattern.

A homestead reveals much to the instructed eye. Its appearance and condition often betray the character, capabilities, social position, and experience of the owner and his wife or wives. The Gəlibdaana of Tɛnzugu and the Yikpɛmdaana of Gorogo each have a large rectangular room of sun-dried bricks, built for them by boys trained at the White Fathers' Mission at Boləga, and used as sanctum, private storeroom, and personal sleeping-quarters. They are both wealthy, ambitious, upstart headmen, whose political and economic privileges are wholly dependent on the white man's rule. Hence, though themselves illiterate and of the generation that reached maturity before British rule became established, they are 'progressives', alert to useful or merely pretentious innovations that add to their prestige or bolster up their self-assurance. The Tɔŋraana, or, to go outside Taleland, the Nangodi na'aba, wealthy men too in virtue of their political role under the British Administration, but deriving their authority from the native social structure, do not require adventitious props to their prestige. Their private rooms are built in native style, with the useful addition of a rough plank door fastened with a padlock. A plank door is a rarity in Taleland, and very hard to come by. If a room in a commoner's homestead is fitted with one, it may be inferred that some member of the family has been abroad a good deal or has close connexions with people who are or have been in Ashanti, in the Colony, or in European service.

Most Tallensi take great pride in the appearance of their homesteads. A dilapidated homestead indicates that its owner is poor or infirm or lazy, and therefore unable to provide the foodstuffs to recompense relatives who might be asked to help him repair it. A good-for-nothing like Yɛlnaar of Tɔŋ-Puhug has a tumbledown dwelling which his neighbours point to with scorn. A man of more self-respect would be

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or implements there. This is due partly to the values associated with it, partly to its use as a stall for livestock, and partly to its being an outside room from which things might easily be stolen. A young man like Ɔndieso has nothing but a couple of unimportant medicine horns stuck into the thatch, a log to sit on, and a few odds and ends in his rather tumbledown *zɔŋ*; for he makes little use of it. Yet the house would be incomplete without a *zɔŋ*; for the *zɔŋ* is the sanctuary of the *yirdaana*'s lineage-ancestor spirits. It is no profanation, in Tale eyes, to fold livestock there. The mundane and the mystical are complementary in Tale thought. Because the ancestor spirits abide there, a diviner holds his consultations in his *zɔŋ*. Among the Talis the lineage-shrine (*bɔɣar*) always rests inside or against the outer wall of the lineage head's *zɔŋ*; the Namoos generally keep such a shrine in an inside room or courtyard. Even if the other rooms of his homestead are thatched, a tendaana's *zɔŋ* must have a flat roof, because the spirits of his predecessors dwell there and the lineage *bɔɣar* and indoor shrines dedicated to the Earth are in it. The investiture of a tendaana culminates in his ritual induction into the *zɔŋ*, which is the final test of his acceptability to the ancestors and the Earth. A chief has a special *zɔŋ* (*zanto'o*), which is not only the sanctuary of the spirits of former chiefs but his council-chamber and the room in which he performs the rites that bless the community during the Great Festivals.

To an elder of great seniority in the lineage hierarchy his *zɔŋ* has a deeper value than to a man of junior status. A person's status is most conspicuously proclaimed at his or her death, when his or her social personality has to be cancelled by rite and ceremony. When a man of subordinate status in the lineage, a man who is not yet the master of his own house, or a young woman, dies, he or she is carried to the grave through a hole broken in the wall of the homestead for this purpose. But the head of a house, or an old woman, is carried out through a hole specially cut in the outside wall of the *zɔŋ*. '*Ti Talis tebhɔm nla*—This is the [great] honour of us, the Tallensi', an informant explained to me. The conventional idea of one who deserves it is that of a man or woman who leaves children and grandchildren to perpetuate his or her line and to celebrate his or her decease. When his homestead is being rebuilt, an old man often tells his sons, half-jocularly but with more than a hint of earnestness: 'Hurry up with the roofing of the *zɔŋ*. I might die, and I don't wish to be carried out through the gateway because the *zɔŋ* is unfinished.' 'May Heaven permit me to attain to lying in the *zɔŋ*, when I die, and forfend the breaking of the wall for me to be carried out' a young man once exclaimed fervently when he was talking about the funeral of a worthy elder. The last rites by which a dead person is finally aggregated to the ancestor spirits take place in the *zɔŋ*.

The *zɔŋ*, the *sapak*, and the *zanɔr* stand for the ideological and jural dominance of the male line of descent. Together, and in particular

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and adds prestige to the occasion, to the widows, to the old women tending the corpse, and to the girls dancing extravagantly in honour of the dead.[1]

A son-in-law should help to dig the grave, to carry the corpse to the grave, or depute a clansman to do so on his behalf. These duties are undertaken readily and with a good will as a rule, whether or not a man has been on good terms with his deceased parent-in-law, though there are no sanctions for enforcing them. Men perform them as a mark of respect to their affines, both to the dead and the living, and it would be a serious affront, causing friction with his living in-laws and deep resentment on the part of his wife, if they were neglected. In addition, there is the incentive of personal satisfaction, for they give a grand opportunity for self-display. The mourning party he brings, his largesse, and the conspicuous assistance he gives at the burial, are all means of showing off his personal importance and his excellence as a son-in-law.

A son-in-law is obliged also to send certain food contributions of prescribed kind and quantity to the funeral of a parent-in-law. Small contributions accompany the mourning party. The principal contribution is due on 'the day of sleeping at the funeral (*kogbedaar*)'. This consists of a sheep or goat cut up and ready cooked, together with a large basket of slabs of porridge and a pot of relish. Unlike the duties previously mentioned, these food contributions are 'debts' (*samər*, pl. *sama*)—i.e. obligatory gifts. If a man cannot pay any of them when they are due, he must do so whenever he is able to; and if he omits to do so altogether before his death, his son will have to settle the debt. For here a sanction that operates in many social and religious obligations of the Tallensi comes into play. If a man dies without paying a ceremonial debt of this kind, then, in accordance with the principle of equivalent returns, he must be done by likewise. *His* son cannot accept the same food contribution from *his* son-in-law until the debt is paid; and this is felt as an affront to his spirit. His son would therefore take steps immediately to set the matter right. In fact it appears to be very rare in normal circumstances, for a man to omit these duties altogether during his lifetime.

Conversely, if a man's daughter or his son-in-law dies, he in turn sends a mourning party to represent him and convey his condolences. He is also obliged to send certain customary food gifts. But these are small in quantity; for though they represent a return in kind for what is due from a son-in-law in like circumstances, they are made by a superior to an inferior, by one who has already conferred a benefit that can never be

[1] The currency chiefly used on such occasions consists of cowrie shells (*laɣapielɔb*, pl. *laɣapiela*, lit. white money, the original form *laɣah*, pl. *ligəri*, being nowadays restricted to British currency), now worth only a hundred a penny. A man can be generous for a shilling, and prodigal for half a crown.

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of this is clearest in funeral customs. If Paanbəbis II, Kutəbis's brother, were to die, Ɔndieso would take part in all the rites prohibited to men whose fathers are still alive. He would not refrain out of respect for Kutəbis. 613

But in matters which involve Ziŋgan biis as a segment of Bəɣayiedət yiri, Ɔndieso acknowledges Kutəbis as his 'father'. Thus when Bontuya, who belonged to one of the other four inner lineages of Bəɣayiedət biis, died, Ɔndieso went to the funeral as one of the representatives of Ziŋgan biis. He then refused to take part in the rites tabooed to men who have fathers alive, saying that if he did it would be an insult to Kutəbis.

Ziŋgan biis also appear as a unit in reckoning prohibited degrees of kinship for purposes of marriage. As we have mentioned before, the inner lineage is the widest corporate group that is a jural unit in marriage. A distant 'sister's son' (*ahəŋ*) of Kutəbis would not be allowed to marry a daughter of Ɔndieso. And this criterion applies also to the inheritance of widows. If Kutəbis were to die, Ɔndieso could not seek any of his widows in marriage, because they are his classificatory 'mothers'. On the other hand, he could do so if Kutəbis were his classificatory 'brother' or 'grandfather'. He can court the widow of any member of any of the four other inner lineages of Bəɣayiedət yiri since generation differences are not recognized beyond the boundaries of Ziŋgan yiri. 613 582

In spite of the ambiguities lurking in his relationship to Kutəbis, the predominant affective tone it has for Ɔndieso is that he is a 'son' and will remain a 'child' (*bii*) in public affairs that involve the whole clan as long as Kutəbis or any of his brothers is alive. Until they are dead there will always be a living if shadowy representative of paternal authority standing between Ɔndieso and his remote ancestors—and that means between him and the world at large, as it impinges on him through the corporate activities of the whole clan. This influences Ɔndieso's attitude to life considerably. He feels that he has not yet reached full social maturity, though he is much more intelligent and better informed than many of the clan elders. One sees and feels this vividly enough in one's intercourse with the natives, but it is not easy to pin down. It came out, for instance, in Ɔndieso's behaviour whenever he accompanied me to the Chief's court. He always took a back seat then, as befits a 'youngster'. It came out also in his attitude to Kutəbis whom he despised for his uncouth ways and all-round incompetence, but yet deferred to with the modicum of respect that is correct in one's relations with a 'father'. 613 554

A man who can say 'I no longer have any fathers' associates himself with the elders, the *kpɛm*, in thought and action even if he is younger in years than some men whom he calls 'sons'. He thinks of himself as a 'father', in particular in relation to the ancestors, as one who has the duty of watching over the welfare of others. It is most marked among 613 622 554

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613 the chiefs appointed since the coming of the white man. Unlike their
622 predecessors they were mostly young men when they were appointed,
554 some of them still having their natural fathers alive. But 'a chief', the Tallensi say, 'is the father of his clan. No one can claim fatherhood over a chief' (*sɔ pu dɔŋa na'ab la*—literally, no one has begotten a chief). Whatever their individual shortcomings, Tale chiefs have one thing in common, and that is a strong sense of responsibility for the welfare of their own clans.

778 As usual, this conception has a religious precipitate. It emerges in
554 the status of a man's *Yin* shrine.[1] A man's *Yin* shrine is not fully established until it is ritually 'built' (*me*). Before that it is only a temporary and incomplete entity—even though it has been receiving sacrifices for perhaps twenty years. And usually it is not until a man belongs to the generation of fathers in his inner or medial lineage—that is, attains the status of being 'fatherless' in most social and ritual situations—that he 'builds' his *Yin*. Thus it often happens that a man dies before his *Yin* is built and his son has to carry out this rite. This applies also to the last stage in the development of a man's *Yin*, its removal to the *zanɔme*, the open space before the gateway. His father's *Yin* shrine is taken indoors and his is put in its place. This is a sign that he has reached the climax of his life. He is not only fatherless, but is perhaps the last of the oldest generation of the inner lineage. He has 'built a house (*me yiri*)', that is, has sons and grandsons to carry on the line and can spend what is left to him of his old age in honoured ease.

601 It must not be thought from the foregoing that Tallensi never extend
613 the term 'father' outside the inner lineage. They speak of all men in the clan or the maximal lineage who belong to the oldest age groups as 'fathers'—and by analogy address any old woman married into the clan as 'mother' and any older clansman as 'older brother'. But these are all courtesy titles. A man will always treat an old man of a different inner lineage to whom he gives the courtesy title of 'father' with respect; but he does not owe him any filial duties or come under his authority directly.

613 To round off this picture, let us return again to Ziŋgan biis for a
554 moment and consider the case of Da'amo'o (aged about 35). He is Kutɔbis's late older full brother's (*bier-soog*) son. He occupies the same homestead as Kutɔbis, but has his own gateway and is economically independent of Kutɔbis. Kutɔbis is his proxy father. In no circumstances can Da'amo'o claim to be 'fatherless'. He is not fond of Kutɔbis; but he cannot escape from his jural and ritual authority. Kutɔbis succeeded to his late brother's social role in full; hence Da'amo'o is his 'child' in all ritual and jural respects. This comes out in Da'amo'o's attitude to life. When a man in this position is asked about affairs that concern the clan, or even his inner lineage as a whole, he will often reply 'I am a child, I do not know. You must ask my older brothers and my

[1] Cf. p. 227 below.

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fathers.' Practically the only sphere in which Da'amo'o can act without first obtaining Kutɔbis's assent is in economic matters that concern his own household alone. He cannot even sacrifice to his own father's spirit without first telling Kutɔbis, though responsibility for making the sacrifice is his and his only.

Da'amo'o's and Ɔndieso's wives had babies about the same time. Ɔndieso went off by himself to consult a diviner in order to find out which of his ancestors was to be the child's spirit guardian; Da'amo'o went with Kutɔbis, who consulted for him. In 1936 Da'amo'o collected a part of his sister's bride-price, consisting of a bull and £2. 10s. He showed it to Kutɔbis, who is the formal 'owner' of income of this sort, and with the latter's permission sent the bull off to his own father-in-law in part payment of his wife's bride-price. He put away the money. But about this time a rash action of Kutɔbis's eldest son brought a long-standing dispute between Ziŋgan biis and another inner lineage of Bɔyayiedɔt yiri to a head. In order to settle it, Kutɔbis, acting on behalf of the inner lineage, had to pay 30s. to the head of the other inner lineage. And as the original dispute and its recrudescence were both occasioned by members of Kutɔbis's nuclear lineage (Pa'ana biis) he had to 'find the money'. He obtained the money from Da'amo'o. Complaining about this to me, Da'amo'o said: 'It is not a debt—Kutɔbis is my father. I cannot ever demand my money from him. But one day my father-in-law will come for another cow for his daughter's bride-price. Then I will go to Kutɔbis and if he has a cow and wants to behave decently he will give it to my father-in-law.' Had Kutɔbis borrowed the money from Ɔndieso it would not have been a claimable debt either; but Ɔndieso would not have given him the money without a definite promise to repay it and without some indication of how Kutɔbis expected to be able to find the money to repay him. These differences between Ɔndieso's relationship with Kutɔbis and Da'amo'o's will be symbolically expressed in their different duties at Kutɔbis's funeral. Ɔndieso will undergo none of the rites of mourning and purification that orphans are subjected to, Da'amo'o is bound to go through all of them.

Our discussion of what it means to a Talɔŋ to have a father alive or not arose from a consideration of the formula 'Kinship does not cross the (inner) lineage'. For the sake of simplicity we have here spoken of lineages as if they were fixed units of structure instead of slowly changing configurations of social relations. In actuality the slowly changing equilibrium of intra-lineage and inter-lineage relations makes itself felt all the time. What is to-day a relatively clearly defined inner lineage will, in ten years' time, perhaps, be in process of splitting up into two inner lineages. Already there are signs of it in the relations of the two segments of Ziŋgan biis and in another generation it may well be that classificatory kinship will cease to be acknowledged between them.

This margin of elasticity in the range of classificatory kinship within

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to be treated as real siblings and 'too close' to be treated as if they were non-clansfolk in these matters. So one cannot marry a clan-sister but may have sexual relations with her, and one cannot abduct a clansman's wife, but to seduce her is not a sin. That adultery with a clansman's wife is very rare and is vehemently reprobated is a sign of the strength of clan solidarity, not of the strength of the sibling tie between clansmen.

A further point of significance is that whereas competition between brothers of the same inner lineage for wives or for politico-ritual office is held to be improper, distant clan-brothers may and do compete. No self-respecting youth would court a girl whom his brother of the same inner lineage is seeking in marriage unless it be on his brother's behalf; but it is a very common thing for several young men of the same maximal lineage or clan to court the same girl in friendly rivalry. Again, Tallensi say that until very recently, when the white man's criteria of suitability for a chiefship superseded the traditional standards, two men of the same inner lineage would never or very rarely compete for a vacant chiefship.[1] In the past, if a chiefship fell vacant, it was generally the oldest men of the clan, heads of at least medial lineages, who competed for it. Speaking of these matters Tallensi say: 'A man and his brother[2] do not like each other (*nit ni u mabiiga pu boot taaba*).' To win a chiefship, they assert, a man will not hesitate to resort secretly to medicine shrines, or to make extravagant promises to his ancestor shrines and the Earth, in order to compass the defeat of his rivals.

The Social Equivalence of Siblings Reconsidered

The solidarity and equality of siblings is a reflex of their social equivalence, but these do not mean the same thing. Equality exists between siblings; their social equivalence lies in their relations with the community at large, as has already been indicated. Many features of the configuration of sentiment and conduct we have analysed in the preceding pages acquire a new shade of meaning if we recognize them as indices of the social equivalence of siblings as well as being expressions of their equality.

Siblings are socially equivalent by reason of their genealogical identity, in whole, as between full (uterine, i.e. *soog*) siblings, or in part, as between patrilineal siblings. There are degrees of social equivalence corresponding to degrees of genealogical identity; so that *soog* siblings are more nearly equivalent than half-siblings and half-siblings than ortho-cousins, and so on.

In regard to their social roles, their rights, and their duties, wherever these are determined by descent, siblings are therefore the more closely identified the nearer they are to one another genealogically, and that

[1] A chiefship is always vested in a particular clan or maximal lineage. Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iv.

[2] A 'brother' of a different medial lineage is meant here.

3: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1949
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593 554 covers almost every standard social relationship of siblings in Tale society. Siblings are laterally identified with one another, so to speak; brothers can replace one another in the social structure in a way that gives rise to a minimum of readjustment in the social relations of any other people affected. This contrasts with the vertical identification of parent and child, which rests on the continuity of the descent line not on actual or potential identity of social roles. This is a generalized formula. It leaves out of account a very important item, the effect of the sexual dichotomy of Tale culture. The distinctive social roles imposed on men and women by this factor restrict the identification of brother and sister to a narrow sphere, and the functions of women limit the social equivalence of sisters to their relationship with each other's children.

593 855 577 In infancy and childhood the equivalence of siblings is of little consequence. It comes out chiefly in the rule that parents should not discriminate between their children (proxy children as well as own children). Tallensi say that, in practice, one cannot help preferring one son to another or one daughter to another. One child may be more obedient or industrious or better tempered than his brothers and sisters, so one will be inclined to favour him; and there is the admitted bias in favour of younger children, especially the youngest, as we have seen. Moreover, proxy children are rarely as dear to the heart of a parent as own children are. Even a mother, whose love for all her children (except the youngest) is proverbially without bias, sometimes has favourites among them. There is plenty of evidence for these admissions. The Chief of Tongo had well over two-score children; among them his favourites were a son and a daughter of about 18, born soon after he was appointed chief. Nor do such preferences stop with childhood. Tiezien reposed his trust in his late brother's two sons, who had grown up in his care. The only son he had of his own who was old enough to assist him in public affairs was, he said good humouredly, too stupid.

But, say the Tallensi, this is a matter of *feelings*—what 'your heart desires (*i suh mboot*)'. When it is a matter of *rights*, to discriminate between children is bad, almost sinful; it is like rejecting one child for the sake of another. It would be regarded as iniquitous for a man to let some of his children go hungry while others were well fed. With two adult sons, as we have seen, it is considered right for both of them to be assisted to marry before either is allowed to have two wives. It is the same with other things in which there is an element of right or duty; and the majority of natives are very conscientious in this matter, at least as far as their own children are concerned. Nowadays, in particular, as has often been emphasized to me, if a man has two sons and does not deal with them equally, the one who feels himself unjustly treated soon finds an opportunity for running away to seek work abroad. Sensible parents follow this rule conscientiously even in trivial matters. Omara

4: Fortes and Fortes E-5 (1934-1936) 1936
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consumption of mutton, and especially of goat-meat is thus considerably greater than of beef; and often a household receives an entire leg or half a carcase as its share of a sacrifice made by some one of junior status. One or two of these animals are slaughtered for sale by professional butchers in the markets every week. The markets which we knew best were all within convenient distance of the small foreign settlements of Hausa, Yoruba, and Mossi people found here and there along the motor-road, and observation showed that they were the chief customers of the butchers. But a Talensi occasionally buys a little meat—from a few ounces for 3*d.*, to a leg for 9*d.* to 1*s.* He may do this when he wishes to make a special gift to the mother of a girl he is courting; or when his wife is confined and he wishes to bring her some strengthening food.

The dog, widely kept as a domestic scavenger, is also a sacrificial animal, though only in special circumstances and on particular occasions such as the New Year's Festival. It is regarded as a great delicacy. Game, greatly prized, is communally hunted with dogs throughout the dry season. This contribution to the larder of the majority, however, seems to be negligible, as game is scarce in the bush on the periphery of Tale-land, and the animals killed become almost entirely the perquisites of chiefs and elders. The carnivores, though regarded with disgust by the young men who take a warrior's pride in killing them, are considered a luxury by the old men. We once observed the division of the carcase of a hyena, shot by a youth, among the elders of his clan. The younger men spurned the animal as a 'filthy thing' because it digs up and devours corpses.

Fish (*nŋ*) is also prized as a delicate food, and there is always a small supply of dry fish available in the market throughout the dry, and part of the rainy season. The Tallensi fish the pools of the partially dry Volta River communally[1] in the dry season, but with poor success, as far as the average householder is concerned. As a rule fish is bought in the market, like meat, only for special purposes.

The innumerable food taboos, some differentiating the sexes, some of totemic significance, and very many varying from individual to

[1] These fishing expeditions are described in a paper by M. Fortes, 'Communal Fishing and Fishing Magic in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast', to be published in the *J.R.A.I.*

6: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1937 FE11 Tallensi FE11

and to give moral support to a man of their own rank, members of his own family, and the *bayardaana*, who, in addition to the sacrificial animals he receives from the owner, is entitled to a present of fish.

Why then do owners of pools call out communal fishing expeditions? They themselves say "because our ancestors did so." A more adequate explanation suggests itself from an examination of the fishing situation in relation to the technique of fishing and to the conditions of ownership of pools. Fishing with hook and line is practised by a few people throughout the year, but the technique is rudimentary, suitable for the capture of an occasional fish and not for the provision of a regular supply. The net technique, on the other hand, cannot be satisfactorily employed by individuals. It is essentially a communal technique. There is thus a practical necessity for communal fishing.

Principally, however, fishing is correlated with the ownership of pools. With few exceptions appointment to a chieftainship by the Paramount Chief of the Division constitutes the title to the ownership of a particular pool. Of the exceptions, I have record of one authentic case of a pool owned by a single lineage and transmitted according to the laws of inheritance. Tradition said that it had been purchased by the ancestor of this lineage from a chief in a time of severe famine. To organize a communal fishing expedition is thus a prerogative of chieftainship[1]. It maintains the prestige and proclaims the status of a chief beyond the confines of his own limited territory. Striking proof of this occurred when the Chief of Yinduri announced an expedition to his pool. When the people arrived there, the pool was found to be so choked with weeds that fishing was impossible. Someone from another settlement suggested fishing a neighbouring pool, belonging to another chief, instead. The people of Yinduri were so incensed by this affront to the dignity of their chief that they attacked and beat the offender. Besides, such an act of communal poaching would have exposed them to the penalty of a heavy fine.

Chiefs, consequently, desire large attendances drawn from a wide radius at fishing expeditions. Actually, however, the territorial range of the attendance at any expedition is limited by the factor of contiguity—the further a settlement is from that of the owner of the pool, the smaller will be the contingent coming from it; while the social constitution of the attendance is conditioned by the principles of kinship. Thus, a man will always accompany an expedition arranged by his mother's brother or other kinsman, even if he is from a distant settlement, since he would probably be permitted to keep his catch, and would be less drawn to expeditions under the auspices of non-kinsmen. Similarly, the *Namoos* clans turn out in far greater numbers to expeditions arranged by *Namoos* chiefs than to those of the *Tallis* chiefs. Another factor influencing the social constitution of fishing expeditions is that people tend to go in family parties.

[1] A commoner who owns a river, as in the case cited above, naturally follows the general practice and on the occasion of the fishing expedition enjoys a prestige equivalent to that of a chief.